

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 214399

STADIS////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS PFOR CG

SUBJECT: MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR ZAIRE

REF: KINSHASA 7197

1. ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY SEELYE CHAIRED STATE/DEPT OF ARMY MEETING AUGUST 27 TO DISCUSS PROPOSED MILITARY ASSISTANCE PACKAGE FOR ZAIRE. EMPHASIS WAS ON FINDING BEST COMBINATION OF ELEMENTS IN LIGHT OF TECHNICAL CONSTRAINTS AND USG POLITICAL NEEDS. ACCEPTABILITY OF PROPOSAL BY MOBUTU WAS KEY CONSIDERATION.

2. FOLLOWING APPROACH WAS TENTATIVELY AGREED UPON:

A) DEPT OF ARMY WILL ATTEMPT COMPLETE STAFFING ON TOTAL MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR ZAIRE WITHIN NEXT TWO WEEKS. OBJECTIVE IS TO OBTAIN COMPLETE INTER-AGENCY CONCURRENCE BY END OF SEPTEMBER IN ORDER TO PRESENT TOTAL PROGRAM--NOT MERELY "IMPACT PACKAGE"--TO MOBUTU.

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B) ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ENVISAGES INITIAL FIVE YEAR PROGRAM AT WHICH TIME FAZ WILL HAVE ONE ANTI-TANK MECHANIZED BRIGADE. ELEMENTS OF BRIGADE WILL BE: ARMORED CAR CAVALRY SQUADRON (AS PREVIOUSLY DESCRIBED); MECHANIZED ANTI-TANK BATTALION, COMPOSED OF: TANK

COMPANY (10 M60'S PLUS ONE TANK RETRIEVER), MECHANIZED INFANTRY BATTALION (36 APC'S PLUS TOWED ARTILLERY AND OTHER ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT).

C) FOLLOWING IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM UNDER CONSIDERATION:

MONTH 1-18: ORGANIZATION, TRAINING, EQUIPMENT OF ARMORED CAR SQUADRON. CONCURRENT TRACKED VEHICLE TRAINING.

MONTH 12-18: DELIVERY OF FOUR (4) M60 TANKS (SEE PARA 3 BELOW).

MONTH 19-60: COMPLETION OF TRACKED VEHICLE TRAINING; DELIVERY OF APC'S, TOWED ARTILLERY, AND ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT; DELIVERY OF SIX TANKS PLUS RETRIEVER.

D) ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WILL OUTLINE LONGER TERM PROGRAM (15 YEARS), IN GENERAL TERMS, LEADING TO EQUIPPING AND TRAINING FULL ARMORED INFANTRY DIVISION.

3. DELIVERY SCHEDULE REFLECTS MINIMAL TIME NECESSARY FOR TRAINING FOR TRACKED VEHICLES AND WILL REQUIRE HIGH LEVEL DECISION TO DIVERT TANKS PRESENTLY PROMISED TO OTHER COUNTRIES. REGULARLY DELIVERY OF NEW TANKS REQUIRES MINIMUM OF THIRTY-SIX MONTHS.

4. DOD FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT PROVISION OF HELICOPTERS COMPLETELY OUT OF QUESTION FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONAL REASONS.

5. CURRENT PLANS ARE FOR COMPLETE PROGRAM, WHEN APPROVED, TO BE PRESENTED TO MOBUTU BY SENIOR USA ARMY OFFICER WHO WILL OUTLINE RATIONAL FOR EQUIPMENT DECISIONS.

6. FYI: FINAL APPROVAL HAS BEEN GIVEN FOR 10 MILLION
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DOLLARS FMS CREDITS FOR ZAIRE IN TRANSITIONAL QUARTER. DEPARTMENT NOW CONSIDERING POSSIBILITY OF GRANT RATHER THAN FMS PROGRAM IN FY 1978 IN VIEW ZAIRE'S FINANCIAL SITUATION.

7. ABOVE PROGRAM REFLECTS CURRENT STATUS OF PLANNING FOR ZAIRE MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. EMBASSY WILL BE INFORMED WHEN STAFFING AND CLEARANCE PROCEDURES ARE

COMPLETED. KISSINGER

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